

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LISBON 04863 090845Z

21

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-15 ACDA-10 SAJ-01 TRSE-00 SAM-01 NIC-01 IO-10

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R 081530Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0971

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION NATO

UNCLAS LISBON 4863

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR NATO PO

SUBJ: VICTOR ALVES, PORTUGAL AND NATO

REF: (A) LISBON 4788; (B) LISBON 4699; (C) PARIS 26506

1. ALL SIX LISBON DAILY NEWSPAPERS (EDITIONS OF NOV 7-8)
PICKED UP COMMENTS MADE IN BONN BY MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO
VICTOR ALVES CONCERNING PORTUGAL'S RELATIONSHIP WITH NATO.
ALTHOUGH PHRASED DIFFERENTLY, EACH NEWS ARTICLE REPORTED
ALVES' STATEMENT THAT NATO IS NOT SUBMITTING PORTUGAL TO
DISCRIMINATION OF ANY SORT.

A. AFTERNOON "REPUBLICA" FRONT PAGED STATEMENT WITH LEAD
"PORTUGAL WILL PARTICIPATE IN THE WORK OF NATO"; STORY SAID
ALVES DENIED THAT PORTUGAL WILL NOT PARTICIPATE IN NATO'S
NUCLEAR PLANNING GROUP (NPG).

B. MORNING "DIARIO DE NOTICIAS" QUOTED ALVES' EXPLANATION
THAT NPG'S MEETING HAD NOT BEEN CANCELLED, BUT ONLY POSTPONED.

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PAGE 02 LISBON 04863 090845Z

SAME PAPER AND AFTERNOON "CAPITAL" ALSO NOTED INFERENCES

DRAWN BY "BRUSSELS NATO CIRCLES" DURING PREVIOUS WEEK
ACCORDING TO WHICH MPT MEETING'S CANCELLATION DUE TO PLANNED
PARTICIPATION BY PORTUGAL. THE US ALLEGEDLY WAS PRINCIPAL
OPPONENT OF ALLOWING PORTUGAL TO PARTICIPATE, FEARING
PORTUGUESE COMMUNISTS WOULD HAVE ACCESS TO NATO SECRETS.

2. "CAPITAL" CARRIED REPORT NOV 4 CONCERNING BRUSSELS
REPORTS WHICH, IT SAID, WHILE NOT HAVING OFFICIAL CHARACTER, COULD
NOT PASS AS MERE RUMOR OR HYPOTHESIS. REVIEWING GOP-NATO
RELATIONSHIP, CAPITAL POINTED OUT THAT:

A. UNDER PRE-APRIL 25 REGIME, GOP-NATO RELATIONS WERE
MARKED BY PRESSURES EXERTED (BY DUTCH AND SCANDINAVIANS
PRINCIPALLY) TO CHANGE GOP'S COLONIAL POLICY;

B. ON CONTRAST, PORTUGUESE DELEGATION OF JOURNALISTS
VISITING NATO HEADQUARTERS AT INVITATION US EMBASSY LISBON
(REF B) WAS GREETED BY ENTHUSIASTIC PRAISE FOR CHANGED
CONDITIONS IN PORTUGAL -- WHICH NOW ALLOWED PORTUGAL FINALLY
TO BELONG IN FACT TO NATO AND ITS IDEALS;

C. ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT'S PROGRAM AND PRES. COSTA GOMES'
DECLARATIONS FOLLOWING RECENT US VISIT REAFFIRMED PORTUGAL'S
COMMITMENT TO NATO;

D. YET, SPIRIT OF COLD WAR STILL NOT ELIMINATED, AND
MILITARY ALLIANCE WITH "DEFENSE PLANS" AND "SECRETS" CANNOT
REMAIN INDIFFERENT TO PRESENCE OF COMMUNISTS IN AN ALLIED
GOVERNMENT. DECEMBER MEETING OF NATO DEFENSE MINISTERS
MAY THEREFORE SERVE EITHER TO DENY ACCURACY OF REPORTS ABOUT
NATO'S LACK OF CONFIDENCE IN PORTUGAL OR TO CONFIRM THEM.
SCOTT

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NUCLEAR ENERGY, PRESS COMMENTS, RELATIONS WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 NOV 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974LISBON04863
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740323-0438
From: LISBON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741159/aaaabyjq.tel
Line Count: 89
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: (A) LISBON 4788; (B) LISBON 4699; (C,) PARIS 26506
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 NOV 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <13 NOV 2002 by WorrelSW>; APPROVED <13-Nov-2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VICTOR ALVES, PORTUGAL AND NATO
TAGS: PFOR, PO, NATO, NPG
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005